

Thirdly, it has to be ensured that the outstanding dues of farmers for the year 1995-96 be paid to them immediately and they should be given the price of Rs. 76 per quintal fixed by the Government.

- (iii) **Need to Allocate adequate funds for repair and maintenance of Railway Tracks in Kerala especially in Shornur and Mangalore sector**

[English]

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN (Cannanore) : Increasing number of train mishaps have been making passengers deeply anxious. I wish to draw the kind attention of this august House and that of the hon. Railway Minister to the numerous derailments that have occurred recently especially in the Kerala region of the Southern Railways thereby upsetting schedules and causing fear and anxiety among the public. This is more evident in Northern Region of Kerala that is Cannanore and Kasargod where it has been noticed that at several spots dangerous cracks have appeared on railway tracks. The main cause for this is lack of timely and periodic repairs and maintenance.

I therefore call upon the hon. Railway Minister to ensure adequate and early allocation of funds for the repair/maintenance of railway tracks, especially in the busy Shornur and Mangalore Sector so as to ensure safety to life and property of the thousands/lakhs of passengers on this sector.

- (iv) **Need to set up Cashew Board to protect the interests of farmers and cashew-nut workers.**

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (Adoor) : In Kerala, the cashew industry is facing crisis for long time back. The production of raw cashew nut and cashew processing is one of the main industries in Kerala. Thousands of farmers are engaged in production of raw cashew nut in Kerala. Lakhs of workers are working in cashew factories and in cashew nut processing.

In Kerala, Kollam district is the main cashew nut production centre. More than 150 factories are running in the cashew field. Workers belong to poor families but they do not get sufficient employment every year.

At present, the cashew workers are getting maximum 30 or 40 days for employment. The shortage of raw cashew nut is the basic problem. The farmers are also facing acute problem due to low prices of their raw cashew nuts. Therefore, there is a proposal for setting up Cashew Board under the Ministry of Commerce like Rubber Board, Coffee Board, Tea Board, Tobacco Board, Coir Board.

If the Cashew Board is set up, the cashew industry will save lakhs of cashew workers and thousands of farmers' interests are also to be protected.

The Government of Kerala and Trade Unions of cashew workers, cashew exporters have also demanded to set up a Cashew Board without delay.

I therefore urge upon the Union Government to take immediate steps for setting up of a Cashew Board.

- (v) **Need to expedite completion of a bye-pass and bridge near Varanasi in U.P.**

[Translation]

KUNWAR SARVARAJ SINGH (Aonla) : Hon'ble Mr. Chairman, Sir, Varanasi is an ancient religious and cultural city which is visited by lakhs of native and foreign devotees and tourists every year. But the roads in the city are very narrow, and the foreign tourists as well as the local people have to face lot of difficulties due to traffic jams for hours together every day and at the same time petrol and diesel worth crores of rupees are also wasted. The former Prime Minister, Late Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri had given an assurance for the construction of a bye-pass at G.T. Road and a bridge over the river Ganga in view of the problems being faced by the people of his area. Accordingly the construction of the bridge over the river and a by-pass from G.T. Road Mohan Sarai to Mugal Sarai was started. The entire expenditure was to be incurred by the World Bank. However, due to slackness and negligence on the part of the Government, the World Bank stopped giving aid from 31.12.1991. Now this project is being handled by the Border Roads Organisation but not even 50 percent of the work has been completed as yet. The cost has escalated several times. With the construction of this road and bridge, the local people and foreign tourists will get relief; the diesel and petrol worth crores of rupees will be saved and, the time of journey to Calcutta will be decreased by about three hours.

- (vi) **Need to provide financial assistance to shrimp farmers affected by hurricane in East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh**

[English]

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagarkurnool) : Sir, the shrimp industry has incurred a loss of over Rs. 65 crore in the hurricane battered East Godavari District throwing small and marginal farmers into a debt trap. Each farmer will require at least Rs. 1.5 lakh for reconstruction of the washed away bunds and Rs. 1 lakh towards the working capital. About 3505 hectares, out of 6303 hectares water spread area, have been affected in 12 mandals, according to a survey of the Marine Products Exports Development Authority. A further estimate says that shrimp cultivation in 1041 hectares valued at Rs. 13 crore was badly affected. The affected area, if not reconstructed before the coming crop season in February, will go waste resulting in a loss of Rs. 102 crore. Most farms have been registered with either the